Abstract of the Disclosure

Possible overflow of a video buffer verifier (VBV) buffer employed in MPEG-like video encoders is prevented by controlling bits being drained from a video encoder buffer (eBuff). Specifically, a number of bits in the encoder buffer is determined when a last prior picture (pic n-1) ends, or when it should end. This number of bits (maxBits) is the maximum number of bits to be read from the encoder buffer and written to the remote decoder before a prescribed time T(n). When maxBits has been read from the encoder buffer and written to the decoder, the writing of bits to the remote decoder is stopped until the process is reset. If the prior picture ends early, maxBits is defined as being the number of bits in the encoder buffer at an expected time (Texp) that the picture should have ended less the number of bits written into the encoder buffer between the time the prior picture actually ended and the expected time for it to end, i.e., Texp. If the prior picture is late, i.e., ends after the expected time for it to end, maxBits is defined as being the number of bits in the encoder buffer at the actual time the prior picture ended. During the interval from the expected time the prior picture should have ended, i.e., Texp, and the actual time that it ended, the maxBits mechanism is essentially disabled. That is, bits are allowed to be read out of the encoder buffer and written to the decoder.